

UNIVERSITY OF THE BAHAMAS COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER GRAND BAHAMA

Dr. Crystal A. deGregory

Dr. deGregory is the founder and executive editor of HBCUstory, Inc., an advocacy initiative preserving, presenting and promoting inspiring stories of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) past and present, for their future. A passionate believer in the historic mission and contemporary vision for HBCUs, she convened the inaugural HBCUstory Symposium in April 2013 in partnership with the Nashville Public Library and Nashville Public Library Foundation. In partnership with the Association of Public Land-grant Universities (ALPU), she convened the second HBCUstory Symposium on October 24 & 25, 2014 in Washington, D.C. and convened the third annual HBCUstory Symposium on October 9 & 10, 2015 in Nashville, Tennessee in partnership with Fisk University.

A native of Freeport, The Bahamas, Dr. deGregory is a proud alumna of the historic Fisk University. She holds a Master of Education from Tennessee State University and received masters and doctoral degrees in history from Vanderbilt University. Entitled “Raising a Nonviolent Army: Four Nashville Black Colleges and the Century-Long Struggle for Civil Rights, 1830s – 1930s,” her dissertation focuses on the role of these colleges and their students in the struggle for equality, justice and civil rights in Nashville, Tennessee.

Dr. deGregory’s research and teaching interests include black Nashville and black education in the 19th and 20th centuries, with special attention to black colleges, as well as their relationship to the modern Civil Rights Movement. She continues to explore interrelationships of these institutions and their civil rights efforts to the wider African Diaspora where they helped engender the social and political development of fledging black nations such as the modern Bahamas.

Her newest work is an epilogue for *The Athletic Experience* at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. She has also written the book chapter, “The Relationships of Revolution: Martin Luther King, Jr., the Civil Rights Movement and Political Change in The Bahamas”, published as part of *In an Inescapable Network of Mutuality: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Globalization of an Ethical Ideal* in August 2013. deGregory is also editor of *Emancipation and the Fight for Freedom* (2013), the sixth volume in the 12-part series *Tennessee in the Civil War: The Best of the Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. Her other published work includes contributions to *HBCU Experience: The Book* (2014), *The Journal of Tennessee State University* (2012), *Encyclopedia of African American Popular Culture* (2011) and *Freedom Facts and Firsts: 400 Years of the African American Civil Rights Experience* (2009). A passionate HBCU advocate, Dr. deGregory is also a regular contributor to *The HBCU Digest*.

Her advocacy work includes serving as one of four doctoral-holding black female hosts of Black Docs Radio and she is a member of several professional and service groups including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.